

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 03302

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

STATE FOR EUR/NE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, EI, UK, ELAB
SUBJECT: IRISH LABOR LEADERS' VISIT TO US TO DISCUSS
NORTHERN IRELAND

1. SUMMARY. IN SEPTEMBER 28 LUNCHEON MEETING WITH DCM AND POLOFF, IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (ICTU) PRESIDENT HAROLD O'SULLIVAN DISCUSSED TRIP TO US WHICH HE AND OTHER IRISH LABOR LEADERS PLAN FOR NOVEMBER. PURPOSE IS TO MAKE CLEAR TO US LABOR LEADERS AND OTHER INTERESTED GROUPS THAT IRISH LABOR IS TOTALLY OPPOSED TO VIOLENCE OR SUPPORT FOR VIOLENCE IN RESOLVING NORTHERN IRELAND ISSUE. O'SULLIVAN PROMISED TO KEEP EMBASSY INFORMED ON TIMING OF TRIP, COMPOSITION OF IRISH GROUP, US ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS INVITING AND/OR MEETING WITH IRISH, AND WAYS IN WHICH WE MIGHT ASSIST. END SUMMARY.

2. O'SULLIVAN SAID TRIP AROSE FROM TALKS WITH THOMAS GLEESON, PRESIDENT OF US INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S UNION, DURING LATTER'S ATTENDANCE AT RECENT ICTU CONFIDENTIAL

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REFERENCE. O'SULLIVAN NOTED THAT IN IRELAND GLEESON HAS LONG BEEN CONSIDERED SUPPORTER OF IRISH NORTHERN AID COMMITTEE AND OTHER PRO-PROVO GROUPS. IN RECENT DISCUSSION GLEESON SEEMED TO INDICATE A CHANGE OF HEART AND SUGGESTED A GROUP OF IRISH LABOR LEADERS VISIT US FOR TALKS WITH AMERICAN COUNTERPARTS AND OTHERS ON NORTHERN IRELAND ISSUE. O'SULLIVAN NOT RPT NOT YET SURE WHETHER

INVITATION BEING ISSUED WILL COME FROM GLEESON PERSON-ALLY OR FROM AFL/CIO. SIMILARLY HE IS NOT RPT NOT CERTAIN WHETHER OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WILL BE INVOLVED. TIMING IS TENTATIVELY MID-NOVEMBER.

3. IRISH GROUP SO FAR INCLUDES O'SULLIVAN; LABOR PARTY LEADER FRANK CLUSKEY; IRISH TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS UNION PRESIDENT, SENATOR FINTAN KENNEDY; AND JACK CURLIS, ICTU VICE PRESIDENT, WHO IS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND. O'SULLIVAN SAID HE REJECTED SUGGESTION THAT THERE BE A JOINT LABOR PARTY-TRADE UNION DELEGATION, SINCE THE UNIONS ARE ORGANIZED ON A 32-COUNTY BASIS WHILE THE LABOR PARTY ONLY OPERATES IN THE SOUTH. ALSO, THE TWO DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE THE SAME VIEWS ABOUT THE NORTHERN IRELAND ISSUE THOUGH THEY ARE UNITED IN OPPOSING VIOLENCE OR SUPPORT FOR VIOLENCE. A COMPROMISE WAS WORKED OUT WHEREIN BOTH THE LABOR PARTY AND TRADE UNION FIGURES ARE INCLUDED BUT THE GROUP'S STATUS IS NOT RPT NOT THAT OF AN OFFICIAL DELEGATION.

4. O'SULLIVAN, AWARE THAT IRISH NORTHERN AID COMMITTEE AND IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS HAVE BEEN PUBLICLY CONDEMNED BY IRISH PRIME MINISTER AND LEADERS OF FINE GAEIL AND LABOR PARTIES, IS NONETHELESS NOT RPT NOT AVERSE TO MEETING WITH THEM IN EFFORT TO SPELL OUT IRISH OPPOSITION TO GUNS AND FUNDS FOR VIOLENCE. HE ALSO STRESSED THAT HE WOULD NOT RPT NOT SAY OR DO (OR REFUSE TO SAY OR DO) CONFIDENTIAL

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THINGS JUST TO BE CONSONANT WITH IRISH GOVERNMENT POLICY. HE DOES NOT RPT NOT NECESSARILY AGREE WITH EITHER THE CURRENT OR PREVIOUS IRISH GOVERNMENTS IN ALL PARTICULARS OF THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD NORTHERN IRELAND. HE WHOLE-HEARTEDLY AGREES THAT VIOLENCE IS NO SOLUTION; IT POSTPONES A SOLUTION.

5. WE THANKED O'SULLIVAN FOR BRIEFING US ON UPCOMING VISIT, AND HE READILY AGREED TO KEEP US INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS. WE CAUTIONED HIM ON LIKELIHOOD THAT IRISH NORTHERN AID COMMITTEE AND IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS WOULD LIKELY SEEK TO USE ANY CONTACT WITH IRISH GROUP TO THEIR ADVANTAGE AND WOULD NOT HESITATE TO DISTORT GROUP'S POSITION TO THIS END. WHILE NOTING THAT TRIP IS PRIVATE ONE, WE OFFERED O'SULLIVAN ASSISTANCE IN HANDLING ANY REQUESTS FOR MEETINGS IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND LABOR AND ON CAPITOL HILL.

6. EMBASSY HAS NO RPT NO OBJECTION TO STATE'S SHARING RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THIS TELEGRAM WITH DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND/OR INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE. SHANNON

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